

REMARKS

In response to the Final Office Action mailed October 27, 2006, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. By this amendment, claims 22-37 and 59-75 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer as to the subject matter underlying these claims. The application as presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

I. Allowed Claims

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 1-21, 38-58, and 76-101 are allowed.

II. Claim Rejections

On page 2 of the Final Office Action, claims 22-26, 28, 59-63 and 65 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Hamamoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,350,977) in view of Deck (U.S. Patent No. 5,309,277). On page 7 of the Final Office Action, claims 27 and 64 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Hamamoto and Deck, and further in view of Kuwabara et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,508,564). Claims 29 and 66 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Hamamoto and Deck, and further in view of Recknagel (U.S. Patent No. 6,031,343). On page 9 of the Final Office Action, claims 30, 31, 67 and 68 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Hamamoto and Deck, and further in view of Sugden (U.S. Patent No. 5,406,176). On page 10 of the Final Office Action, claims 32, 33-36, and 69-74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Recknagel in view of Launey et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,086,385). On page 15 of the Final Office Action, claims 37 and 75 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly obvious over Recknagel and Launey, and further in view of Tadokoro et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,367,470).

Applicants respectfully traverse each of the foregoing rejections. Notwithstanding Applicants' traversal, claims 22-37 and 59-75 have been cancelled so as to accept the subject matter of those claims deemed allowable and execute allowance of the present application. Applicants do not accede to the propriety of the rejection of any claim, and respectfully reserve the right to file one or more related (e.g., continuation) applications directed to the subject matter of the cancelled claims.

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Dated: November 20, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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